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SUBJECT: ASSISTANT SECRETARY FRAZER DISCUSSES ANJOUAN AND
ZIMBABWE RUNOFF ELECTIONS WITH TANZANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER
MEMBE

Classified By: Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, T. Mushingi
for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

SUMMARY

11. (C) On June 3, Tanzania's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Bernard Membe, discussed with Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, Jendayi Frazer, next steps to hold accountable Comoran rebel Mohamed Bacar and strategies to prepare for the June 27 runoff election in Zimbabwe. Membe said President Kikwete is quietly exploring if the African Union (AU) court would be willing to try Bacar in Arusha. Membe relayed in detail a SADC meeting at the TICAD in Japan, where President Mbeki of South Africa and Zimbabwe's Foreign Minister succeeded to stall SADC's plans to deploy election monitors to Zimbabwe. A/S Frazer stated that the June 2 arrest of Arthur Mutambara was an indication that Mugabe and his forces have "crossed a line" and that the conditions for free and fair elections are not in place. She stressed that the U.S. has and will continue to make strong statements, but the African Union (AU) must also stand up, take a public stance and, most importantly, send as many monitors as possible to oversee the June 27 runoff elections.
End summary.

Anjouan

12. (C) While Minister Membe said Tanzania considers the successful restoration of legitimate rule to Anjouan to be "history," the question of how to administer justice to Col. Mohamed Bacar remains. President Kikwete has been quietly exploring the possibility that Col. Bacar be brought to Arusha and tried in the African Union (AU) court. Membe said the French Ambassador to Tanzania told him all requests for asylum in France or a French territory would be denied. However, the French are resisting Bacar's return to Comoros because they do not believe he would get a fair trial in Moroni. According to Membe, if the AU court would be willing to take Bacar's case, President Sambi of Comoros could agree. However, Sambi in turn, does not trust the French government. Thus, President Kikwete continues to explore the possibility of a trial at the AU court.

13. (SBU) Membe confirmed June 15 is the date set for elections in Anjouan and training of Comoran police and military authorities continues. Membe raised a cautionary

note, namely that while the ballot boxes are ready, the ballots need to be reprinted with the correct date. This could delay the elections slightly, with June 30 as the fall-back election date. A/S Frazer remarked that the U.S. preferred that Anjouan elections to be held as soon as possible so that Comoros can qualify for African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) eligibility.

Zimbabwe

14. (C) Minister Membe said he and President Kikwete were extremely concerned at the level of violence Mugabe has unleashed against the opposition. South Africa and Zimbabwe have succeeded thus far to divide and paralyze SADC so that to date no decision has been made about deploying election monitors. Membe said Tsvangirai and other MDC leaders have no protection; there is ample evidence of the continuing violence from witnesses, NGO groups, and injured persons in hospitals. He noted the Tanzanian envoy to Harare had visited hospitals and met victims along with U.S. and British diplomats, thus provoking Mugabe to brand Tanzania as "puppets of the Americans." At the last SADC meeting in Mauritius, the Zimbabwe representative refused to speak to Kikwete.

"Chaotic" SADC meeting in Japan

15. (C) Membe reported SADC is sharply divided over Zimbabwe. In Japan on May 28 at the margins of the TICAD meeting, SADC leaders tried to hold a strategy session on election monitor preparation, but the meeting broke up in confusion with no

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resolution, a rare occurrence in SADC. President Mwanawasa of Zambia was the Chair, but President Mbeki and the Foreign Minister of Zimbabwe constantly interrupted him and would not let the discussion on election monitors proceed. Mbeki insisted: "Why does this group need to see the report? This matter should be handled by the SADC Organ on Defence, Peace and Security." The Organ is a troika of three countries: Angola as chair, Tanzania and Swaziland. However, President dos Santos of Angola, who is in poor health, Membe said, was not in Tokyo. Mbeki kept asking for justification of why the leaders needed to see the report. There was no cooperation and Mbeki refused to let the Zimbabwe monitoring issue be raised, Mwanawasa as Chair was harassed by Mbeki and unable to make any progress.

16. (C) A/S Frazer emphasized to Minister Membe that well before June 27, monitors should be in place so the SADC must decide now how many monitors to send. Membe explained that within SADC, South Africa and Namibia are solidly supporting Zimbabwe's position; Angola, Swaziland and Mozambique are vacillating; while Zambia, Botswana and Tanzania solidly support deploying monitors and creating the atmosphere for free and fair election in Zimbabwe. The Congo DRC representatives listen, but rarely take the floor, acting more like observers.

17. (C) As a result of the nearly chaotic meeting in Tokyo, Membe confided the SADC plan to send as many monitors as possible is breaking down. A/S Frazer said in that case, the African Union (AU) must assert itself, take action and send monitors. Otherwise the outcome of this runoff election will be determined by the violence and intimidation of Mugabe's forces. The victory will go to Mugabe, which could likely trigger another crisis. A/S Frazer and Membe discussed that unless a significant number of monitors are in place, Mugabe would still have the upper hand. For example, if there are only 200 observers inside the country, the Mugabe forces could block them from deploying to key rural regions. Having a large number of monitors is critical, A/S Frazer insisted, and the AU nations need to step up to this task.

18. (C) A/S Frazer was emphatic that if there are no monitors in Zimbabwe, the election cannot be free and fair. While

there has been some discussions about a coalition or unity government with a first winner and a second winner, in truth, there is no common agreement on a process for such a government. Who would head it ? Who would control it ? How could Zimbabwe be governed under such an agreement? A/S Frazer told Minister Membe she is convinced the conditions are not there to establish a unity government. Membe commented that it appears all possible paths forward "are leading to a quagmire."

¶9. (C) A/S Frazer stressed that the arrest of Arthur Mutambara on June 2 merely because he had placed an op-ed in the newspaper criticizing Mugabe was unacceptable. Mugabe's forces are striking at the MDC party at every level and appear not to be afraid of anyone or anything. Mutambara's arrest and detention is blatant and cannot be ignored. A/S Frazer told Membe that in her view, the June 27 runoff is merely an attempt to steal the election. In addition, President Mbeki is protecting Mugabe, serving as his shield. She also confirmed that Mugabe has threatened to expel our U.S. envoy.

¶10. (C) A/S Frazer told Minister Membe that Mbeki had sent President Bush and the British a ten-page letter, filled with racial undertones, stating that the "West should stay out of Zimbabwe's affairs; it is none of your business." Although he wrote the letter as the President of South Africa, he legitimizes his positions by speaking as the SADC facilitator. She remarked: "How can he describe Zimbabwe as a country where the West should not be allowed to help Zimbabweans? When South Africa was under apartheid, it was appealing to the entire world for help."

SADC, AU Must Not Be Intimidated

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¶11. (C) A/S Frazer was adamant that SADC, the AU and the international community must not be intimidated. In particular, the African Union must assert itself and say: "No more!", even though it puts President Kikwete in a delicate situation. She relayed that when Mbeki was working with ECOWAS to resolve the situation in Cote d'Ivoire, he was ineffective and too close to Gbagbo, so ECOWAS basically dismissed him. SADC or the AU needs to consider taking the Zimbabwe facilitation out of Mbeki's hands. Pressure needs to be brought against Mugabe; otherwise even if the elections were postponed, as President dos Santos of Angola has suggested, it would only be postponing the crisis; Membe agreed.

¶12. (C) A/S Frazer suggested that a conversation must be initiated with the moderate security forces in Zimbabwe and an appeal made to moderates within the ZANU-PF, encouraging them to move away from Mugabe. She said that President Mbeki is too legalistic, and constantly tries to defend Mugabe. Membe noted that Mbeki is frustrated with the ANC, where he has no support, and frustrated as well with the domestic situation in South Africa.

¶13. (C) Membe said President Kikwete is concerned about the safety of Morgan Tsvangirai. Any attempt to hurt or, worse yet, to kill him could cause a civil war which in turn would create a situation for the military to take over. Kikwete and he are well aware that after such a war, the military would finally control the country, and could well install Mugabe as the "father of the country." A/S Frazer stressed that Mugabe is testing us all: "The arrest of Mutambara crossed a line; our response needs to be coordinated and strong." A/S Frazer added that Mugabe's wife had made a statement that win or lose he would not leave and intends to be president for life. "I am sure this accurately reflects the whims of Mugabe himself," she said.

¶14. (C) Membe urged that the U.S. continue to send strong messages. "If the international community continues to speak

out, to create space, that will allow the African nations to move," he stated. A/F Frazer replied that Mugabe clearly is clinging desperately to power: "At this juncture, someone could give Mugabe assurances that if he steps down now, he will not be charged with any crime. However, if he were to threaten the life or hurt the opposition leaders, then the situation would change; at that stage perhaps an intervention would be warranted."

¶15. (C) Minister Membe stressed that pressure from the international community is critical at this juncture. He reiterated that the AU members had deeply appreciated the "silent support" of the United States during the Comoros crisis: "It strengthened our hand, your silent support, so we were confident to succeed." Membe asked that we create a situation now where Mugabe will feel intense pressure: "Create a credible threat and we will take advantage of that threat to execute our decisions. I can assure you that at least 85 percent of AU members are tired of Mugabe being in power," he concluded.

Participants

¶16. (U) The participants in the June 3 meeting in Arusha, Tanzania were:

Government of the United States:
Hon. Jendayi E. Frazer, Assistant Secretary of State
for African Affairs
Fatuma Sanneh, Assistant to A/S Frazer
Mary Johnson, US Embassy Dar es Salaam, notetaker

Government of Tanzania:
Hon. Bernard Membe, Minister of Foreign Affairs and
International Cooperation
Amb. Ombeni Sefue, Tanzanian Ambassador to the
United States

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Notetakers

¶17. (U) This cable was cleared by Assistant Secretary Frazer.
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